

Week Ending Friday, January 25, 2002

**Proclamation 7520—National
Sanctity of Human Life Day, 2002**

January 18, 2002

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

This Nation was founded upon the belief that every human being is endowed by our Creator with certain “unalienable rights.” Chief among them is the right to life itself. The Signers of the Declaration of Independence pledged their own lives, fortunes, and honor to guarantee inalienable rights for all of the new country’s citizens. These visionaries recognized that an essential human dignity attached to all persons by virtue of their very existence and not just to the strong, the independent, or the healthy. That value should apply to every American, including the elderly and the unprotected, the weak and the infirm, and even to the unwanted.

Thomas Jefferson wrote that, “[t]he care of human life and happiness and not their destruction is the first and only legitimate object of good government.” President Jefferson was right. Life is an inalienable right, understood as given to each of us by our Creator.

President Jefferson’s timeless principle obligates us to pursue a civil society that will democratically embrace its essential moral duties, including defending the elderly, strengthening the weak, protecting the defenseless, feeding the hungry, and caring for children—born and unborn. Mindful of these and other obligations, we should join together in pursuit of a more compassionate society, rejecting the notion that some lives are less worthy of protection than others, whether because of age or illness, social circumstance or economic condition. Consistent with the core principles about which Thomas Jefferson wrote, and to which the Founders subscribed, we should peacefully

commit ourselves to seeking a society that values life—from its very beginnings to its natural end. Unborn children should be welcomed in life and protected in law.

On September 11, we saw clearly that evil exists in this world, and that it does not value life. The terrible events of that fateful day have given us, as a Nation, a greater understanding about the value and wonder of life. Every innocent life taken that day was the most important person on earth to somebody; and every death extinguished a world. Now we are engaged in a fight against evil and tyranny to preserve and protect life. In so doing, we are standing again for those core principles upon which our Nation was founded.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Sunday, January 20, 2002, as National Sanctity of Human Life Day. I call upon all Americans to reflect upon the sanctity of human life. Let us recognize the day with appropriate ceremonies in our homes and places of worship, rededicate ourselves to compassionate service on behalf of the weak and defenseless, and reaffirm our commitment to respect the life and dignity of every human being.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eighteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-sixth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., January 23, 2002]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on January 24. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

January 19, 2002

Good morning. On Monday, communities across America will celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Laura will visit Atlanta to commemorate the day in Dr. King's hometown. I will welcome Dr. King's family to the White House. This year's observance is an opportunity to celebrate the contributions of Dr. King and honor the principles for which he lived and died.

Americans can proudly say that we have overcome the institutionalized bigotry that Dr. King fought. Now our challenge is to make sure that every child has a fair chance to succeed in life. That is why education is the great civil rights issue of our time.

So my administration worked with Republicans and Democrats to enact into law the most far-reaching educational reform in a generation. We are insisting on high standards for all our children. We're putting a new emphasis on reading as the first step toward achievement. We're offering teachers new training, and States and localities new flexibility. And we're going to measure and test how everyone is doing in our new accountability system, so we can get help to children before it is too late.

We have a special obligation to disadvantaged children to close the achievement gap in our Nation. In my next budget, I will propose an increase of \$1 billion for the Federal program that aids disadvantaged schoolchildren. That's on top of the 18 percent increase in last year's budget. In fact, Federal spending on Title I will increase just about as much in the first 2 years of my administration as it did in all the previous 8 years combined. I hope Congress will approve this request.

At the same time as we fund Title I, we're giving extra help to children with special needs. The Federal program for special needs children was established by the law known as IDEA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. My 2003 budget requests an additional \$1 billion for IDEA, as well, an important increase. But we want these new dollars to carry to special education the same spirit of reform and account-

ability we have brought to other education programs.

This reform effort began Tuesday, when Education Secretary Rod Paige convened the first meeting of the new Presidential Commission on Excellence in Special Education. This distinguished and diverse group, chaired by former Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad, has a clear mission, to propose reforms that will make special education an integral part of an education system that expects all children to reach their full potential.

We must have high expectations for children who are more difficult to teach or who have fallen behind. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. would accept no less than an equal concern for every child in America, and neither will my administration.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 1:32 p.m. on January 18 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 19. In his remarks, the President referred to Title I of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law 103-382), which amended Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Public Law 89-10); and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Public Law 94-142). The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 18 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at a Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday Celebration

January 21, 2002

Well, thank you all very much for coming. Mrs. King, thanks for this beautiful portrait. I can't wait to hang it. *[Laughter]*

I want to welcome you all to the White House. We've gathered in tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., to the ideals he held and the life he lived. We remember a man who brought much good into the world by the power of his voice and the truth of his words.

For some of you here this afternoon, Dr. King was and is a special part of your life as a colleague and a friend and a brother. Four call him "Dad," and we are pleased that two of his children are here with us today.